

Bipartisan legislation helps veterans gain employment in commercial trucking industry

WASHINGTON —By unanimous consent, the House of Representatives today passed the Military Commercial Driver's License Act of 2012 introduced by U.S. Representative Mike Quigley (IL-05). The legislation gives active duty military personnel, military reserves, members of the National Guard, active duty United States Coast Guard, and Coast Guard Auxiliary members more flexibility in obtaining a Commercial Driver's License, allowing them to pursue job opportunities immediately after leaving the service.

“Our service members give everything to keep America safe, including frequent deployments and station assignments all over the country and far away from their permanent homes,” **said Congressman Quigley**

. “By removing the unnecessary barriers that prevent these hardworking men and women from obtaining a commercial driver's license, this legislation allows America to give something back by providing them with a valuable skill to advance their civilian employment opportunities when their military service ends.”



Rep. Mike Quigley, shown here visiting with Illinois airmen at a base in Afghanistan, has worked to improve opportunities for current service members and veterans.

Quigley's bipartisan legislation was introduced with Representatives Larry Bucshon (R-IN) and John Carney (D-DE) and companion legislation in the Senate passed unanimously last week. The bill is expected to be signed into law by President Barack Obama.

Under current federal law, states are only permitted to issue CDLs to those who are legal residents of that state. Since military personnel often receive their vehicle training in locations other than their home states, such as their duty stations, the law makes it difficult for members of the armed forces to obtain a CDL before leaving military service. Both the Department of Transportation and the Department of Defense have identified this law as a barrier to employment for veterans.

The Military CDL Act allows active duty military personnel to obtain a CDL in either the state where they serve or where they received their military training, regardless of whether it is their state of permanent residence. The bill also gives the Department of Defense the opportunity to reach agreements with the states where it conducts motor vehicle training to issue CDLs to active duty military personnel, and opens the door to allowing veterans to use interstate agreements that recognize each other's CDLs to carry their license to other locations after military service.

According to the Truckload Carriers Association, approximately 200,000 long haul trucking jobs are currently open nationwide. As the economy improves, the demand for commercial drivers to transport manufactured goods is expected to rise. The Bureau of Labor Statistics estimates that the trucking industry will expand by more than 300,000 jobs between 2010-2020.

The Military CDL Act is endorsed by the American Trucking Association and the Owner-Operator and Independent Drivers Association (OOIDA).

"I am glad that we were able to work together, in bipartisan fashion, to pass the Military CDL Act by unanimous consent in both chambers of Congress," **said Congressman Bucshon.** "This

legislation aids our veterans in finding work after their military service by cutting red tape and streamlining the CDL process. Currently, many veterans are unable to use military qualifications when applying to civilian jobs. Our servicemen and women have one of the highest unemployment rates in the country and trucking companies have one of the largest amount of job openings in our workforce. This commonsense, bipartisan bill will help our military service men and women find jobs and will help move more commerce across our nation."

"The men and women who serve in our armed forces develop skills and knowledge that make them very valuable employees," **said Congressman Carney**. "I'm very pleased that the changes made through the Military CDL Act make it easier for these veterans to put their training to use immediately upon leaving the service. This legislation strengthens the economy by helping more trained, quality employees enter the workforce, and gives veterans a firm foundation to begin the next phase of their careers."

Rep. Quigley has been committed to good government reform in his two terms in Congress. He sits on the Committee on Oversight and Government reform and has authored [legislation to protect service members and veterans](#) from being targeted by deceptive for-profit colleges. He founded the bipartisan [Transparency Caucus](#) and has released [Reinventing Government: The Federal Budget Parts I and II](#), which establishes transparency in the budget process and offers 60 recommendations to save \$2 trillion over the next 10 years.

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